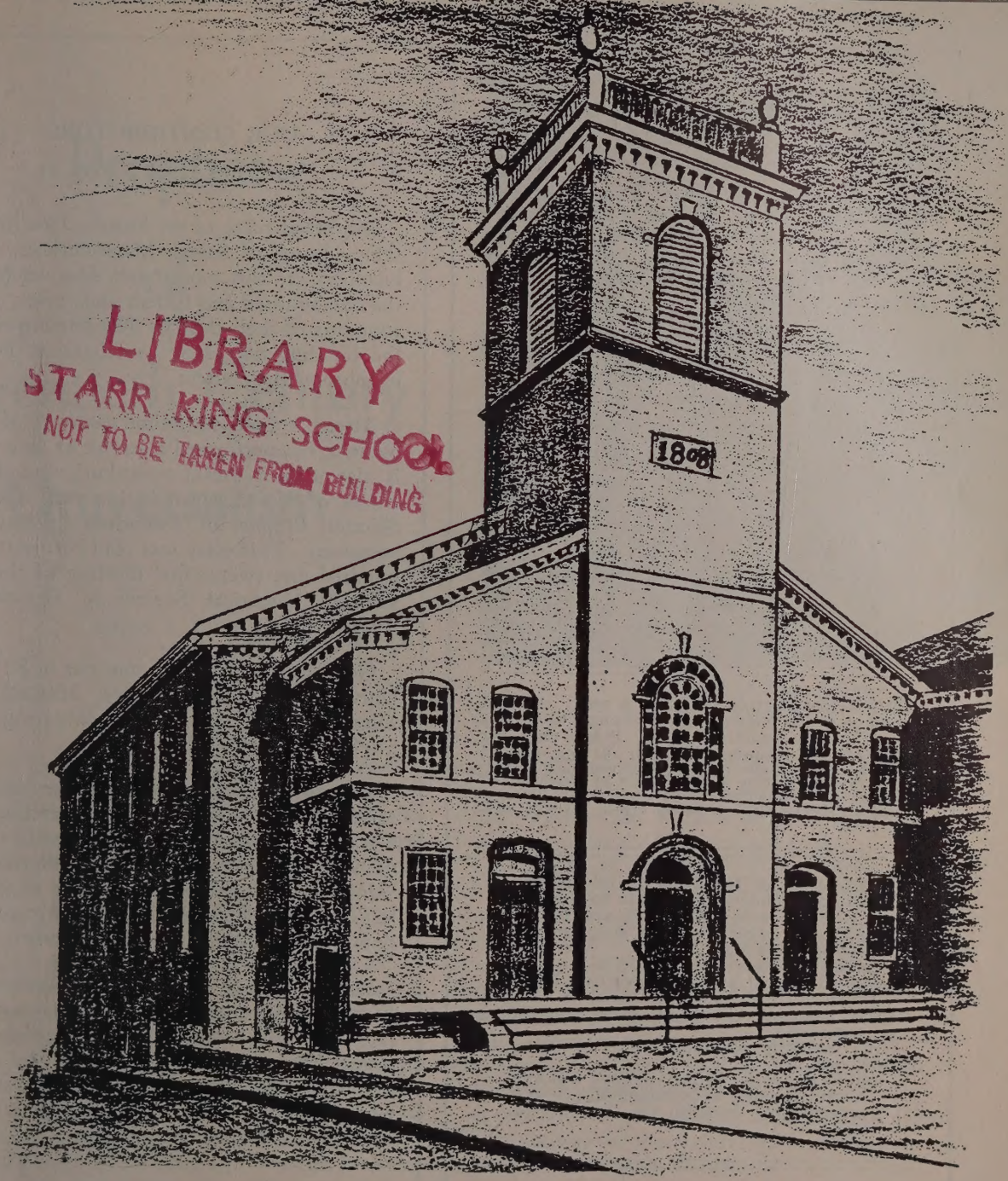
THE UNIVERSALIST Leader



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Volume CXXXVII

November, 1955

Boston, Mass.

THE UNIVERSALIST Leader

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY FOUNDED BY HOSEA BALLOU IN 1819

Continuing the CHRISTIAN LEADER and its predecessors (1819 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST and its predecessors (1827 to 1897), the GOSPEL BANNER (1835 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST LEADER (1897 to 1926), and THE CHRISTIAN LEADER (1926 to 1953).

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The bond of fellowship in this church shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to co-operate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.
To that end we avow our faith in
God as Eternal and All-conquering Love,
The spiritual leadership of Jesus,
The supreme worth of every human personality,
The authority of truth known or to be known,
And in the power of men of good will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

November, 1955 — No. 11

Our cover pictures the historic First Universalist Church of Salem, Massachusetts, whose members are this month and next celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of their church. The line drawing of the building was done by Roger A. Poor, a member of the church.

Alfred S. Cole, long-time associate of Dean Skinner, has performed a service of love which is also a most useful contribution to the archives of Universalism in his essay **Clarence Skinner, Prophet of Twentieth Century Universalism.** This essay was read before the one hundred and twenty-first meeting of the Universalist Historical Society in Detroit last August.

Gordon B. McKeeman, minister of St. Paul's Universalist Church, Palmer, Massachusetts, summarizes the essence of Thanksgiving in the brief essay, **Much Obliged.**

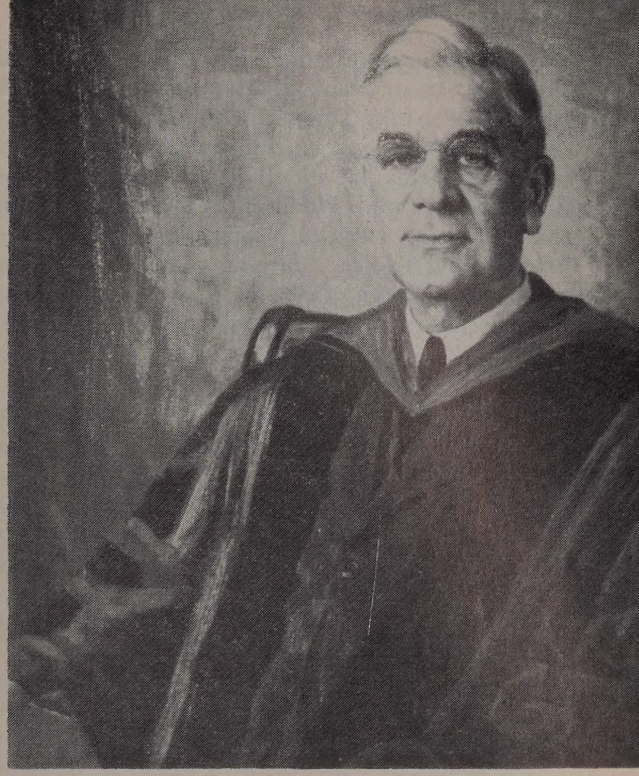
Ellsworth C. Reamon, minister of Betts Memorial Universalist Church, Syracuse, New York, past president of The Universalist Church of America, replies to Dr. Scott's assertion that "Universalist state conventions are now obsolete" (*Leader,* September, 1955) in his contribution **Outmoded??? State Conventions.**

Henry Holm, British correspondent for *Worldover Press,* presents factors in contemporary life which seem to him to explain **Why Russia Changed.** This is a thoughtful discussion of an important subject by a journalist whose record for accurate interpretation of events is far higher than average.

Freedom of the Press Sunday will be observed in Universalist and Unitarian Churches, November 6.

Prophet of Twentieth Century Universalism

Alfred S. Cole



Portrait of Dean Skinner

IT IS an almost impossible assignment to imprison in cold type the color, glow and meaning of the life of Clarence Skinner. One must reach back into the archives of memory and pull out a recollection here and an anecdote there. Conversations must be recalled, books and addresses must be read, those unspoken, silent influences radiating from his spirit must be recaptured. The impact of his ever-youthful mind upon college youth must be weighed. Then all of these must be fitted into some kind of a picture — that we may better see and appreciate this magnificent person who lived and moved among us.

I will warn you at the beginning — because of my long years of association with Clarence Skinner, as a student, a friend, and a co-worker in Tufts College — that I am bound to be more or less biased in the picture which I shall draw. Long ago, I ceased to expect perfection in any man or woman. I know we all have feet of clay — and that lesson learned through the years may help me to be *honest* and *realistic.*

If you will take the trouble to "peg in" almost anywhere along the way in the history of the Universalist Church, roughly speaking since the 1830's, you will find a Skinner occupying a prominent place or rendering valuable service in the cause of liberal religion. The name is in the van of those preachers, executives, artists, writers, and *teachers who have fought for freedom in religion and liberal education.*

Call the roll, if you will: — *Warren Skinner,* vigorous fighter for Universalism in an earlier day; *Otis Ainsworth Skinner,* preacher, executive, and leader in helping to give Tufts College a decent financial start in 1855; *Charles M. Skinner,* editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle,* author, critic and lecturer; *Otis Skinner,* prominent actor; *Cornelia Otis Skinner,* actress and author, and many others of this amazing family who, in one way or another, have contributed so much to our liberal religious heritage.

It seems as if a great deal of the richness of character and intellect of this fine family were concentrated in the life of Clarence Skinner.

The Man

Clarence Russell Skinner was born in Brooklyn, N. Y. in 1881. He was the son of Charles M. Skinner, editor of *The Brooklyn Eagle,* and Ada B. Skinner. His childhood was spent pretty much in Brooklyn. Many of the father's characteristics, ways of thinking,

and attitudes, appeared in later years in the son's life. In so many ways Charles Skinner was a very remarkable man. As editor of the *Eagle* he won the respect and affection of the reporters and editorial writers on the big New York newspapers and all over the country, as well. He loved and read *Homer* aloud to his two boys, Clarence and Harold. The old rebels, Emerson and Thoreau, were his constant companions in his rambles through the city streets and in the country. He championed Walt Whitman when that poet's writings were considered to be smutty and unclean. This outdoor poet, in particular, inspired him with an intense love of nature. Amid the busy life of an active journalist, he found time to write nine books and at least three plays.

So many of the fine qualities of the father can be found in the son — an intense *love of nature and music — independence of spirit — a stubborn honesty — and a great sympathy for the under-dog.*

In his book, *Do-nothing Days,* Charles Skinner expressed his individualism in this manner:

> "If Socialism is ever accomplished, what are we tramps and hermits and dreamers and rebels and scribblers to do? For, be assured, we shall not submit to any worse slavery of law and custom than society tries to put upon us now. I care not a rap for the glory of a country that will not allow me to live my own life. Liberty is the first glory of all lands — liberty to live for happiness: liberty to buy it cheap!"

As a lad Clarence attended the Erasmus Hall High School, and there his talents found an outlet in debating and acting. He was a good student, very serious in everything he did. In fact this seriousness and inability to relax were characteristic of him throughout his life, and often prevented people from understanding him. Unlike his father, he never was able to attain smoking-room cordiality with other people, especially if he did not know them well. As a kindly critic stated it — "I never saw Clarence really let go!"

In 1900 he began his studies at St. Lawrence Univisity. His was the first class to enter under the new president, Dr. Almon Gunnison. While in college, he continued his interest in dramatics, becoming the president of the dramatic society. He was a member of the debating team, president of the class of 1904, editor of the college paper, active in the Canton Universalist Church and a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

While in college, he decided that acting was to be his life-work. Later he changed to the profession of the ministry, although he never graduated from a theological school. Just why he made this shift I cannot say, although the blood of the actor and the clergyman were in his illustrious family.

On leaving college in 1904, Clarence accepted a position as assistant minister to Dr. Frank Oliver Hall of The Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City. Here he came in constant contact not only with the machinery of a parish church, but also with both the seamy and cultural sides of the life in a great city. He preached occasionally in several of the Brooklyn churches, and filled The Divine Paternity pulpit in the absence of Dr. Hall.

In 1906 there were two important events which gave direction and stability to his life. He was ordained to the Universalist ministry in The Church of the Divine Paternity, and he married Clara L. Ayres, of Stamford, Connecticut, whom he met for the first time as an undergraduate in St. Lawrence. Through all the years which stretched ahead, Mrs. Skinner, in her quiet, persuasive way, was to be a tower of strength and a constant inspiration in times of danger and trial.

Dr. Skinner's first parish was in Mount Vernon, N. Y. (1906-1910). While there he spent a considerable amount of time in the New York settlement houses. Seeing the way the "other half lived" in the crowded and filthy tenements of a great city, with the attendant vice and crime, he was literally baptized into the "social gospel." Then and there a spirit of revolt was born in him that never died out during his entire lifetime. It was during his pastorate at Mt. Vernon that Clarence Skinner called together the first meeting of the New York ministers, which later became known as The Church Peace Union.

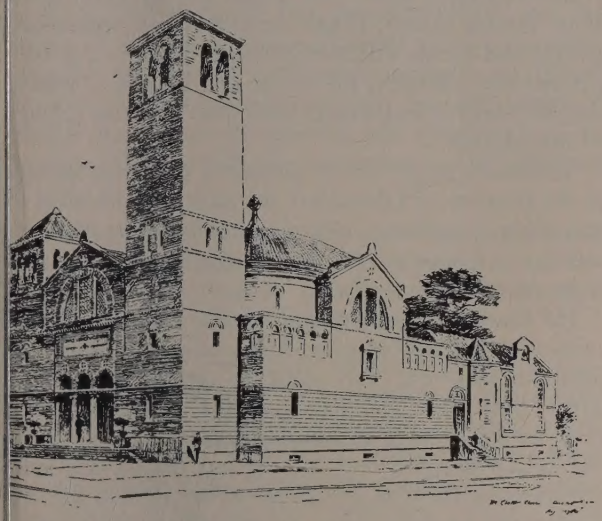
In 1910 he left Mount Vernon, after having built a fine new church edifice, and went to the Grace Universalist Church in Lowell, Mass. During his four years in that city, he established the first church forum in New England. He brought to its platform many of the outstanding leaders of thought in the fields of religion, politics and economics. Varied types of subjects were discussed, from religious and literary problems, to contemporary political movements. These forum meetings were tremendously successful and drew capacity audiences.

It so happened that Dr. Lee S. McCollester, then Dean of Crane Theological School, was scheduled to speak on one of the Sunday forum programs. He became greatly attracted to this earnest young liberal, and soon after (1914) invited him to come to Tufts

and teach the subject of Applied Christianity in the School of Religion.

The Teacher

Here began a most interesting and active period of Dr. Skinner's life. World War I had just started. The clouds of fear and suspicion descended on college campuses, Tufts included. Many of the academic leaders became panicky. True to his pacifistic leanings, he could not honestly support the war, and because of the simple, direct honesty which characterized all that he said and did, he met with a great deal of persecution and misunderstanding. Those were hectic days for the young professor of Applied Christianity, for along with Jane Addams of Hull House fame, and many other fearless leaders, he was publicly listed as a pacifist. All too many of his brother



St-Grace Universalist Church, Lowell, Massachusetts

ministers gave him a wide berth and the professors on the Hill, with a few exceptions, shunned him. This is only a mild indication of what he went through during those hysterical years.

In spite of the fact that this young liberal nearly lost his teaching position, he held fast to his convictions until the hysteria abated and many of his ideas about the war were vindicated. As a student, sitting in his classes, I had a pretty clear idea of the gruelling experiences Dr. and Mrs. Skinner passed through, and the bitter loneliness they felt because of the attitude of his fellow ministers and professors.

Thus in a period of unprecedented hysteria and hatred began a teaching ministry which lasted until his retirement. *Throughout it all he never once lowered his banners or compromised his convictions.* All of which goes to show that Clarence Skinner was a very stubborn man when once his mind was made up as to the rightness of his cause.

As a student who entered Tufts College at the time when Dr. Skinner started his teaching career, and as one who took every course he gave during the undergraduate period, I might be fairly well-qualified to discuss his methods of teaching. He was first, last and always the teacher, whether in the Community Church pulpit, the college classroom, or the occasional address and sermon.

He had the uncanny ability of clarifying ideas. Whatever the subject happened to be, *Comparative Religions, Applied Christianity* or *Religious Biography,* he approached it from all sides, analyzed it clearly and then, without forcing his conclusions, laid it out before the student that he might choose for himself — what he considered to be the truth or the best course to pursue. One was never in doubt as to what the teacher himself thought.

The zeal, dedication and downright honesty of the man were a continual source of inspiration as well as knowledge. He commanded the respect of all his students, because they knew he had mastered his subject and thought his way through to his own conclusions concerning poverty, the curse of war, or a hundred other subjects.

That this may not seem to be just my over-enthusiastic statement, let me quote a few lines from a letter received by Dr. Skinner during World War II from one of his former students (not a theological student by the way) in a New Guinea foxhole.

"New Guinea, May 28, '45.

"If you remember, I was a member of the class of '33 and I took courses with you in introductory sociology and race problems. Of all the professors under whom I have studied, I think you are the one who made the greatest imprint and who gave me . . . some of the first lessons in humanism and liberalism. You are one of the most tolerant, patient and righteous men I have had the pleasure of knowing . . . The two most important contributions that you gave me were your steadfast and beautiful concept of *peace* and the strong desire to aid in any sensible and worthwhile housing project. With the coming of 'peace' in this torn world again, municipalities in keeping with the promise of the future may do more in the way of building housing projects. This will be a monument to your foresight and greatness.—PHILIP GOLTZ"

This is effective teaching, and yet in his modesty, Dr. Skinner had thrown that letter away, one among many others, which crystallized in cameo-like clarity the power and effectiveness of his teaching and the contagious influence of his personality on the minds of youth.

He taught in Tufts College School of Religion until his retirement as Dean in 1945, and many a man in our liberal ministry today (Universalist and Unitarian) can testify to the tremendous impact this modest, humble teacher made upon his thinking and his attitude toward the liberal ministry. He, himself, was the student always. Continually searching, pressing forward toward new goals, youthful in spirit, forever the liberal, uncompromising and honest in his own convictions.

During his teaching career every spare half-hour or free period was used to polish off a chapter for some book he was preparing for publication, or writing notes in his bold long-hand scrawl for a sermon, address, or Phi Beta Kappa oration. He was an indefatigable worker and never really learned the art of relaxation.

In 1920, with the efficient help of Mrs. Gertrude Winslow, Mrs. Skinner, and John Haynes Holmes, Dr. Skinner founded the Community Church of Boston. He served as its leader for the next fifteen years. Far-reaching and unique has been the work done by this great liberal institution in the city of Boston during the past thirty-five years. As in the case of his Smaller Forum in Lowell, he brought to its platform world-renowned speakers on a great variety of subjects, permeating the life of the city and New England as well, with liberal ideas concerning religion, politics, world affairs, war and peace and personal religious problems. No controversial topic was too hot to handle, for in the blunt give and take of the forum question period all sides were presented in varying degrees of oratorical skill, and all grievances aired.

During his teaching years (1914-1945), it seemed as if Dr. Skinner always had a book in the offing. In fact he was generally working on two or three manuscripts pretty much at the same time. One of his earlier works was *The Social Implications Of Universalism* — a formal review of the impact of Universalism on the social evils of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Other volumes are *Liberalism Faces the Future* (1937); *Human Nature and the Nature of Evil* (1939); and then in 1941, in collaboration with this writer, *Hell's Ramparts Fell — a Life of John Murray; A Religion For Greatness* (1945) and the last book (in manuscript form at the time of his death) *Worship and the Well Ordered Life* (1955). This manuscript was arranged and printed by Kenneth Patton on the Charles Street Press and sponsored by the Universalist Historical Society. This is about the only book at the present time which deals with the problems of worship in the liberal church.

Time and space prevent detailed analysis of these books. They should be read now in the light of present day events. Many of the chapters are written in a language which is too academic and repetitious, but the ideas and philosophy expressed represent the thinking and work of a great liberal idealist.

Prophet of Liberalism

In studying a man's life a few fundamental questions always arise. What are the forces, influences, people and events which mold his thinking and govern his actions? What is the source of his faith? Where did he find his inspiration and what are the springs of his religion?

Therefore, to get a clear picture of Clarence Skinner as the prophet of Liberalism, we must seek answers to the above questions. It goes without saying that *his sources of power and his passion for this social gospel were rooted in many soils.*

He based his faith on the broad, liberal concepts of *the brotherhood of man.* Many of the old injustices must be removed, *wars* must be outlawed, and the great principles underlying the Universalist faith must be *put to work* in building better cities, eliminating social injustice, and rooting out the vicious evils which make for war. In order to do all this the old *partialisms* (a word often on the lips of the pioneer Universalists) must go. The best in all the great world religions must be utilized to build a decent world and topple the moss-covered wall of intolerance.

Then again his soul caught fire from the spirit and the enthusiasms of the Yankee reformers of the late nineteenth century, this "long line of men and women in western civilization", as one writer states, "who have fixed their eyes on 'what *ought* to be'; to supply the *community with a tension that real religion gives to the truly religious person, between what one is and what one ought to be.*"

The mantle of Walter Rauschenbusch had fallen on Clarence Skinner's shoulders — the mantle of *The Social Gospel.* The basic underlying idea in all this was that human nature is not static and fixed. *It can be changed* — and one way to do it is to eliminate

hese ancient evils which men considered to be fixed nd eternal. *They are not!!* They can be removed. Man, weak, wayward creature that he is, *can* stand up, hake off his chains and walk erect and free, if he will!

These chains, however, cannot be broken by the ld method of violence and bloodshed. Clarence kinner's way was grounded in the New Testament (The Sermon On The Mount in particular), the eaching of Leo Tolstoi, and the life and disciplines f Mahatma Gandhi, whom he almost worshipped. *He knew full well that in order to break chains with hese tools one must be self-disciplined, with lean, hard, mental muscles and more than all else, a great ove for people.*

Our blasé generation, shaken to its foundations y the cindery rubble of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the orror of the Nazi ovens, had better try to gain some- hing of the insight and enthusiasm of this liberal rophet. He knew, only too well, the weaknesses of uman nature as he painted his vivid picture of *what ought to be* with the somewhat watery pigments f *what is.*

Clarence Skinner was a *Mystic* in the truest sense f that much abused word. His mysticism was the ellspring of all that he thought and did. Perhaps t can best be explained in his own words:

> If there is anything which ought to be distinctive of religion, it is a feeling of active relationship between the self and a mystic *other,* better world. There is no reason why this sense of relationship should be confined to a hazy realm which the soul visits after death. *Can there not be a social and political mysticism which calls forth an eager faith?* Can we not visualize another better world which *is not yet real,* but is capable of becoming a reality? The old mysticism was individualistic. The other mysticism would contain *a diviner urge and lay upon man a sense of something great to be done!*
>
> It is reported that one of the saints of the early church sang and preached along the road from Asia Minor to Rome, where he awaited certain martyrdom; and while on that journey he wrote to his friends that he longed to feel the teeth of the Lion sink into his flesh so that he might bear witness of his faith. He knew that he was going to that mystic, better world beyond death, and he went to it with triumph. *Would that we of today might go to that mystic other-world of the new era of reconstruction with something of that spirit.* Not to die for it as the saint of old, nor to kill for it, as does the soldier, *but to live for it — to live splendidly, with utter devotion.*

This social mysticism, far from being just a pretty philosophy, was for Clarence Skinner as magnificent and compelling as any which illumined the minds of the saints and prophets of old. *It was, for him, the very breath of life!*

I know he is indeed a rash person who even tries to speak for another. Nevertheless this query comes to mind, — if we could hear his vibrant voice today, what do you suppose he would say to us? In view of what I know of Dr. Skinner's outlook and his type of thinking, it might be something like this! "Nourish the prophetic spirit! In all this important business of wheels turning within wheels, amid the work of stream-lining denominational machinery — *never let the lure of numbers, money-drives, or outward success or flattery conceal or dim the real purpose of the Liberal Church.* It must sustain and nourish the prophet, the protest-ants — those sensitive souls whose lives mirror the picture of a new and better day, and whose hard, biting words strike fire within our hearts.

"This is the glory of the Liberal Church that in spite of the smallness of pigmy minds, *it has fathered and mothered the prophets.* When it ceases to do that, it deserves to die!" And if I know Clarence Skinner, he might add this admonition, "and what are you, students in my classes, my friends and admirers, doing today to carry on this prophetic ministry? Has my voice died out upon the wind, or do you still hear it sounding in your hearts? Where are the liberal prophets in a day of fear, hydrogen bombs and a time of pathetic hunger for peace? What is your answer?"

Our liberal prophet penetrated to the center of the issues facing our generation, when he tried his best to expand and enrich the meaning and content of that magnificent name which we are labelled — Universalism. As Norman Cousens stated it, "The vast test for the world's great religions is — can religion act in behalf of the human family at a time when it is in dire danger. How important is man anyway?"

It took the cosmos more than two billion years to create the conditions for producing and sustaining human life, but it could take human intelligence less than a day to bring it down about our ears. Too much of our religion has merely become one of the values

we fight for, instead of a *vital force itself leading the way toward a better world.*

In the last article Dr. Skinner ever wrote for the *Leader* (June 19, 1948), "The World of Tomorrow — Who? — What? — When? — How?" a skillful analysis, he concluded with these paragraphs:

"We need spiritual giants in the earth who dare to break the shackles of the past; creative, onward-looking pioneers, who dare to go forward.

"We need a new philosophy which repudiates the old intrenched selfishness and exclusiveness of the past and which proclaims a more ample life for the growing spirit of man.

"We must find new instruments for solving our problems; no longer the bludgeoning of the axe, but the effective methods of understanding and cooperation.

"Above all, we must move forward now!

> Forward!
>
> From Superstition to Reason;
> From Authoritarianism to Freedom;
> From Partialism to Universalism;
> From Individualism to Socialism;
> From Indifference to Conviction;
> From Fear to Faith—
> From Disorder to Discipline—
> From Anarchy to Organization—
> From War to Peace—"

I shall not say much about Clarence Skinner's death. There is no need, for it is too close to us! (Aug. 26, 1949.) All I have to do is to use the magic of imagination and memory, and I can see those deep-set, clear blue eyes and the wry little smile crack the corners of his mouth.

In the last analysis, who can sum up the man and personality we call Clarence Skinner? Who can say that this person making an impassioned speech on the subject of world peace, is the man? Is this vivacious lecturer, analyzing some controversial social problem before a class of young men and women, the person? Is this student, writing chapters for a book in the quiet of his study, the man? *Is this Clarence Skinner?* Could it be the man, sensitive to his finger tips to the music and beauty of the world, writing poems concerning the haunting mystery and pain of life, *is this the individual?* Is this stubborn, unyielding prophet, with soul on fire against the evils of the world which maim and debase human nature, *is this Clarence Skinner?*

You know the answer! No one of these can sum up the charm, honesty, and sincerity, and courage of the man we know as Clarence Skinner! Perhaps we had better not try to define him. The attempt will fail anyway. Let's be glad he lived, that for a little while we were privileged to walk the way with him, and feel the kindling glow of his presence and the inspiration of his dreams of a better world. The question remains, *do we, in our day and generation, dare to be such men as he?*

William Shakespeare, in a passage found near the close of his drama "Julius Caesar," sums up the idea I wish to leave with you. It is so simple and direct that it fits Clarence Skinner perfectly:

> "His life was gentle; and the elements so mixed in him, that nature might stand up, and say to all the world, 'This was a man!' "

BECAUSE YOU WENT TO CHURCH

Because you went to church, a great many people were helped.

It helped the minister, because he was encouraged by your presence; and your spirit, strengthening his spirit, lent wings to his aspiring soul in prayer.

It helped the others present, because they were encouraged by the fact that you too were present.

It helped those who were not present, to know that you were there.

It helped the Church, and the Church will be that much stronger.

Because the Church was made stronger, the community will be benefited, because strong churches are promoters of the Good and defenders of the Right.

It helped your denomination, because denominations are the totals of their individual churches.

It helped your state and nation, because states and nations derive their strength and rectitude from strong churches, which are powerhouses of righteousness; and it is righteousness alone that can exalt a nation.

It helped the whole world, because all the world is looking to America for help in these days of uncertainty and insecurity.

It remains only to add, that it helped you, too, for no one can give so much help to others, without himself being blessed by his well-doing.

Little did you realize that so much good could possibly be done by such a little thing as going to church. Then go, by all means, and be regular in your attendance.

—SHELDON CHRISTIAN

Are We Much Obliged?

Gordon B. McKeeman

ONE of our common expressions of gratitude is "much obliged." We often use the expression without too much attention to the meaning of it. To say "much obliged" is to express one's gratitude by saying that it is so great as to have put one under obligation to do something that one would not have done otherwise, especially for the benefactor.

And we certainly are much obliged. We seldom pause to think about the extent to which we are obliged, not merely to our personal acquaintances for personal favors, but to the great anonymous body of humanity for the numberless hours of labor which are given that we might find life easier and more bountiful. There is probably not a single article in our homes that would not reveal behind its being in its present form and location the gigantic interrelatedness of men and women the world around.

What obligations do we see in all of this? Certainly it would occur to us that as the beneficiaries of this cooperation, we might well do our part to further this cooperation, that its benefits might be made even more enriching and more far-reaching. We are the heirs, not alone of the past, but also of the living present. It is by the sweat of other brows than our own that we are enabled to eat of the fruits of the field. When we are perhaps tempted to wonder what labor and capital are trying to do to the world, we look around us at the examples of their cooperative handiwork. Thanksgiving continues because it is our opportunity to say "much obliged."

The idea of being "much obliged" carries an important thought concerning Thanksgiving. A mere saying that one is grateful is largely meaningless. To say a prayer of thanks before eating, and then to waste food that could be used to good advantage by some hungry person is a travesty on Thanksgiving. It is the sense of obligation that finds its source in the sense and realization of indebtedness to others that lies at the heart of the real celebration.

But the sense of indebtedness should rather be directed to keeping the cooperative process in operation than in a narrow reciprocity. Benjamin Franklin once lent a man some money with the admonition that he not repay the loan, but that he grant a similar loan to some other friend in time of need. The true spirit of gratitude makes us look forward and not backward.

A TRUE FOLK-FESTIVAL

No holiday in our calendar is comparable to Thanksgiving. There is not a holiday quite like it anywhere in the world. It celebrates no battle, no fall of a great man, no political revolution, no church ritual. It is the great holiday of common people who have worked all the year, and now thank God humbly for good harvests. We are not celebrating Washington or Columbus, or the Declaration of Independence — but just the true, good things, the simple blessings of the soil and the common life. Most holidays are somehow pagan and, if traced back, are rooted in the dull and bloody stories of some old war; but Thanksgiving is the holiday of peace, the celebration of work and the simple life. You must go back to the old Greeks for anything to compare with it; a true folk-festival that speaks the poetry of the turn of the seasons, the beauty of seedtime and harvest, the ripe product of the year — and the deep, deep connection of all these things with God.

—DAVID GRAYSON

THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

Nature itself through the ages has held the clue to freedom from want and fear, the basis of national and international security. All races of humanity are biologically the same. The sun is the source of energy of all nations. The chlorophyll of plants which captures elements from the air, water and soil is found in every nation. Nature seems to promote all races irrespective of color or artificial tradition. Nature is an internationalist in the provisions made and the immutable laws that assure their operation. All races, nations and creeds must find the way to share, use and insure the resources of nature and the contributions of man for the common good if a global democracy is to be achieved.

—HARCOURT A. MORGAN

Outmoded ???

State Conventions

Ellsworth C. Reamon

NOW that The Universalist Church of America has reached the bottom of the barrel, so far as available unrestricted trust funds are concerned, we are being told that state conventions are "outmoded": that they stand in the way of the total church enterprise and therefore should be liquidated in favor of some kind of regional set-up and their funds entrusted to The Universalist Church of America so that the larger work may be served. Very interesting!

Dr. Clinton Lee Scott in a recent *Leader* article did not say it quite that way but there is no mistaking his meaning. He contends that: "Frequently Universalist money is in the wrong pocket . . . that state conventions tend to spend their money on themselves . . . without reference to greater needs elsewhere." I am reminded here of a remark made by the late Chancellor James Day during a financial crisis at Syracuse University: ". . . the only tainted money is the money that 'taint mine'." Clint Scott, with his penchant for the smart phrase, almost makes it seem as if financial solvency in a state convention were a sin. It could be. But there is something to be said for a careful stewardship of funds and resources. Let's take New York State as an example.

Members of this state convention were among the first to see the need for a Ministers' Pension Fund. They established such a fund and, by careful planning, wise investment and sacrificial giving, that fund has reached respectable proportions. It serves our ministers and their families. We have been urged to throw our pension funds into a common pot. That might be called a noble gesture but it would also be a tax on the ambition and vision of the people who created the fund. With a little more gumption and zeal, other state conventions might have established their own pension funds.

Meanwhile, the New York State Convention has built up its trust funds, not through hoarding but through a careful husbanding of resources. We do not believe in deficit financing. As a result, we have been able to finance our own work and support denominational and other projects at the same time.

And, as Dr. Scott says, we operate a Theological School at St. Lawrence University . . . now about to celebrate its Centennial and inaugurate a new era. Clint might have had the grace to say that that school provides ministers and directors of religious education for the whole denomination — for Unitarian, Methodist, Congregational and other churches. True, we have had support for our school from many sources beyond the borders of New York State . . . and rightly so. We are profoundly grateful for that support but mark this: that school would have been lost long since had it not been for the *constant support* of the New York State Convention of Universalists. If there were space here, I could name an astonishing number of Universalist schools which have been lost largely because that kind of constant support was lacking.

A few years ago our state convention purchased and now operates a beautiful institute property at Unirondack. Here the doors are open to all liberals and ecumenicity is a common practice. Here, again,

the "larger work" is served while New York Staters pay the bills.

I have no gripe against the "Boston Crowd" and I think I have proved my denominational loyalty. With all respect, I would like to ask: what has The Universalist Church of America done by way of fiscal policy to warrant the liquidation of state conventions and the transfer of state funds and responsibilities to the central office?

The assumption seems to be that merger with the Unitarians is inevitable. Therefore, we must revise our pattern of organization to conform to theirs. Forget about the love and loyalty of Universalists who produced the resources. "Merger of the American Unitarian Association and The Universalist Church of America would make necessary identical area divisions," says Dr. Scott, "and it is certain that the lines would not be the lines of the political states. There are no insuperable barriers to the complete merger of the two denominations, but this matter of state conventions and their resources withheld from the total church enterprise becomes a crucial factor in any plans for Union."

There it is in plain English. That assumption was nursed at Andover and weaned at Detroit. And woe to the man who dared to question it. In one way or another, he was made to feel that he did not belong to this great liberal movement: he was a reactionary.

As I look back in calm appraisal, it seems to me that the Detroit Convention reached a new low in churchmanship. Delegates were spoon-fed from beginning to end but the vitamin content was low. No provision was made for discussing the most important concern before us: the "Common Purpose" which unites us and makes us a Church. All we could talk about was "merger" and man's confidence in himself.

So here is one small voice crying in the wilderness and protesting against this constant pressure for a centralized authority. To talk about liberalism and centralized authority in the same breath is ridiculous. Say what you will: merger involves loss of identity and when you have lost that, you have lost all: the incentive to work and sacrifice, the sense of mission, faith in your cause and a spirit of dedication. Is this the price we must pay for something called "Liberalism"?

I am altogether in favor of a closer relationship between Universalists and Unitarians and other liberal groups. I would like to see a United Liberal Church . . . drawing together all liberals in a truly democratic federation wherein the particular identity of each would be preserved. *The biggest stumbling block to that kind of liberal fellowship . . . and the costliest . . . is merger.* Let us hold what we have and enrich it, let Universalists and Unitarians and any other interested groups maintain their identity, propagate their faith and enrich their peculiar gifts. Each has something important to contribute. And all we need at the top is an absolute minimum of ecclesiastical machinery and personnel. Let us remember that Liberalism is not a religion — it is only a way of approach.

MAN AND HIS UNIVERSE

We must recognize the mystery that surrounds us. We must be somewhat more humble than some of our ancestors who thought the universe revolved around their gaudy little civilizations. Man is one of many living types — all of them struggling to live on earth. We are part of the cycle of seasons, not spectators watching the gyrations of a world running like a crotchety alarm clock in the hands of an eccentric clockmaker.

When floods overwhelm, there are reasons. Our adjustment to the river valleys must be different than our Indian fore-runners who could move the tepees quickly to higher ground. We have leveled the forests which absorbed so much run-off water. Ignorant and careless farming has caused the loss of much topsoil which retained moisture. Because we have upset the natural balance we must adjust to that fact or expect more disastrous floods "another day." Flood control dams, reforesting, soil conservation, restoration of organic elements — all these procedures must develop or the streams will flood again.

This is our only home, this universe. It's a place where difficult, grievous and mysterious things happen. Some events we can understand and try to improve. Our growth and happiness are always dependent on the necessity of having something to overcome. There can be no achievement without problems.

This universe evokes our worship. Is it not stirring to our imagination and our sense of reverence to be aware that we are a part of the majesty of the heavens, of the surging strength and stark beauty of the seas, the uplifting power of a forest giant, the "haze on the far horizon"? We are part of the body of unity and mystery. This encounter with nature of which we are a part, but an encounter we are able to experience — it is the setting for worship, the throb of Presence.

—Carl J. Westman

CLARA BARTON BIRTHPLACE CAMP FOR DIABETIC GIRLS

185 Campers, 5-15 years of age

Representing 18 states and 3 foreign countries

The new program was most successful, resulting in many comments from parents similar to the appreciation expressed in the letter on this page.

The flood waters presented many problems, necessitating emergency measures, including the cancellation of the adult period. The Campers came through in high spirits even though their return home was delayed several days. We were fortunate that damage was confined to the waterfront area.

Why not plan a visit to Camp next summer?

A Spring In T
And A S

Dear Mr. Vail,

We are not familiar with the organiz
the Association of Universalist Women
thanks for our daughter's camping op
along to the women who have made

Janie went to camp thin, pale and up
diabetic who had not recouped after
came home popping the seams and h
full of assurance and self confidence.
and is adjusted to it physically. She
than we have ever known her.

Janie also came home swimming so w
the Intermediate Class in public scho
achievement awards at Camp for impr
heard of either when she left home. C
camp songs by the hour, undertakes h
with her small sister than formerly. S
when she left home — normal mentall

We could not have done so thorough
We are deeply grateful for what the C
the financial help which made it poss
pool, the effects of camp will affect Ja
influence.

Will you please express our appreci

**It is now costing approx
at Camp. This summer
per week. This leaves a
coming year.**

**YOUR CONTINUED G
THE WORK DO**

eps
n Their Hearts

the Clara Barton Birthplace Camp or
wever, that if we express to you our
summer, you will be able to pass it
ie to have this wonderful experience.

physically — a new and unadjusted
ad cough. In three short weeks she
ess, a lovely shade of rosy-tan, and
d her condition completely mentally,
oing, light-hearted, and good-natured

eek she passed from the Beginners to
sses here. She tells us that she got
ry and badminton — she had never
ive, sometimes sullen child now sings
cheerfully, and gets on 100% better
about two years older than she did

laughter in three times three weeks.
did for her; and we are grateful for
attend. Like tossing a stone into a
any areas and in widening circles of

n.

A Grateful Parent.

eek to maintain a child
d an average of $25.20
ce to be raised for the

VILL MAKE POSSIBLE
ETIC CHILDREN

THE ELLIOTT P. JOSLIN CAMP FOR DIABETIC BOYS

176 Campers, 5-15 years of age

Representing 19 states and 4 foreign countries

Continued progress was made in helping these boys adjust to their condition. They leave Camp more confident that they can do what their non-diabetic friends can do. They are better equipped to discipline themselves with diet, exercise and insulin.

Being marooned for a week was quite an experience, causing many difficulties, as we were without power for our water supply, refrigeration and lights. Flood damage was serious only at the Pond where part of the dam and the road were washed away.

Ask Yourself These Questions About Our Freedoms

Freedom of the Press Sunday

UNIVERSALIST and Unitarian churches will observe Freedom of the Press Sunday on November 6. The occasion will recall Peter Zenger and his dedicated attorney, Andrew Hamilton. It will bring to memory also the heroic martyrdom of Elijah Lovejoy for the cause. The day will memorialize all those out of whose labors and on whose costly sacrifices our freedom of the press has been established. Radio and television programs, as well as newspaper and magazine columns, will contribute to the affair by dramatizing the importance of a free press.

This is all to the good in these days so dangerous to freedom. Freedom of the Press Sunday, however, should remind us that freedom itself is a seamless garment. To damage any part of our freedoms is to endanger all parts.

While we do well to remember the heroes of the long-continuing struggle to establish and to maintain a free press, we must also recall our own duties as individual citizens in this area. Garnishing the tombs of the prophets is an easy, too easy, business, which can degenerate into a cheap sport. For praising the prophets is mere sentimentality unless it be accompanied by rededication to their spirits, and to the causes for which they sacrificed.

If Freedom of the Press Sunday is to have validity it must stimulate increased support *for freedom* in the minds and activities of the celebrants. The press will remain free only as long as American citizens and taxpayers successfully guard all freedoms.

If you really want a free press, Mr. Citizen Churchman, you must do something about it.

Ask Yourself

Do you read and support only those papers and magazines that print what pleases *you?* If so you are doing mighty little to support freedom of the press.

Do you shout with anger that "there ought to be a law against this" when papers print what you do not like? If so you are weakening freedom of the press.

Do you, on the other hand, read your papers and magazines objectively and intelligently? If so, you not only support freedom of the press, you also help maintain your own freedom and that of your fellowmen. This is so for two reasons: first, the objective and intelligent reader will not be swayed to hysteria or foolish optimism by headlines; and, second, he *will read* the whole story of important news items, and probably several versions. If he thinks the story distorted or unfair, he will protest to editors and publishers. This process, as unspectacular and relatively unimportant as it may seem to the individual, is none the less of major importance. It helps editors and publishers to maintain a fair press which in the last analysis is the only truly free press.

One other question tests your real support of freedom of the press. It is this: Are you as generous with your praise as you are with your protests? When a newspaper or magazine does a courageous thing for the common welfare do you write your appreciation to that paper? If so, you strengthen the arms of all those dedicated publishers, editors and reporters who try hard to make the press serve all of the freedoms of all of us.

And finally, do you recognize in your thinking and acting, that all of our basic freedoms are vital? If freedom of the press is to have any meaning we must maintain freedom of religion, of speech, of association, *and of the right to differ!*

A Case in Point

A sharp case in point which involves the Universalist Church is the recent attack by insinuation on the Fund for the Republic. What is the Fund for the Republic? It is a corporation set up by the Ford Foundation, the object of which is stated in the current report of its president, Robert M. Hutchins, as follows:

> "The object of the Fund is to advance understanding of civil liberties. The Board of Directors believes that the rights of Americans should not be compromised or lost through neglect or confusion. It believes that the citizen should know what his rights are and what is happen-

ing to them. This is the reason why the fund has used all the media of communication — radio, television, newspapers, magazines, records, and books — to arouse an interest in civil liberties and to encourage debate about them.

"The Fund for the Republic is a kind of a fund for the American dream. This dream undoubtedly has economic aspects; many people came to this country in the hope of getting rich. But the essence of the dream is and always has been freedom, the escape from tyranny — political, religious, economic, social — into a free country where a man could work out his own destiny in his own way. The Fund for the Republic is dedicated to reminding Americans of this essential quality of the American Dream and to reporting on the state of freedom today."

Who are these directors who believe so completely in the importance of American civil rights that they are making available several millions of dollars to stimulate interests in our freedoms? Are they justifiably suspect? Are they irresponsible radicals? You answer that one. The Chairman of the Board of the Fund for the Republic is Mr. Paul G. Hoffman, who is also chairman of the board of the Studebaker-Packard Corporation. His fellow directors are leading industrialists, university and law school presidents, heads of large insurance companies, and distinguished scholars.

The directors of the Fund have made financial grants for study of civil rights and American freedoms to Catholic, Protestant and Jewish institutions. They have set up careful study projects under competent auspices of universities and bar associations. All of these projects and grants have to do one way or another with the stated objects of the rights and feedoms of Americans. Then why the opposition? We believe it is due to the unhappy harvest of fear and suspicion which has ripened among us through these years of tension. These very fears and suspicions have been stimulated by the methods we have used to combat subversion and the danger of subversion. With all of these things some of the studies financed by the Fund will deal. This means controversy. It means calling into question methods of governmental investigation. It means questioning the legitimacy or wisdom of the enormously increased power of departments of the federal government. And, alas, it seems to mean to some people the possibility of further subversion.

Whatever the reasons, the Fund for the Republic and the organization through which it is presently working have come under attack via radio and from leaders of some veterans' organizations.

This illustrates all too well that while we are engaged in celebrating freedom on one front our freedoms are threatened on all other fronts. When a responsible organization engaged in open and honest support of our historic freedoms comes thus under attack, freedom is in double jeopardy.

If and when you heard some of these attacks, and if, perchance, you heard your church named as a recipient of a small grant from the Fund for the Republic in a recent radio broadcast, how did you react?

Now is the time for all men and women, particularly church men and women, *and especially liberals,* to stand up and be counted *for free discussion and free inquiry in defense of American freedom.*

DEAN SPANTON

NOT only in the Midwest, but all over the country where there are Universalist ministers and lay folk, the news of Dean Spanton's death brought sorrow. Universalist ministers held for Dean Spanton that combination of profound respect and warm affection that only a wise and noble colleague can inspire. Always in his presence one felt strengthened and encouraged.

Albert I. Spanton belongs to that magnificent breed of men who, without material wealth inherited or acquired, have contributed enormously to the true greatness of these United States.

Over a half century ago, the young Albert Spanton gave the money he had saved for graduate education to help his Alma Mater in a grave emergency. He postponed his plans and went to work for the struggling little college, Buchtel. He never resumed those personal plans. Instead he gave all of himself to teaching and administering a growing institution which became Akron Municipal University, serving a large area of the Midwest. To many hundreds of grateful students he was both good teacher and cherished counselor. Always he was a loyal Universalist minister.

Through the years, Dean Spanton knew great personal tragedy. The experience neither embittered nor weakened him. Through good years and bad, he was to students and friends the strong and cheerful soul who helped others through their troubles.

Universalists can best celebrate his life by renewed dedication to that high universal religion for which Dean Spanton lived and labored.

Why Russia Changed

Henry Holm

IT was well over a year ago that Sir Winston Churchill, in the House of Commons, said that after the Pacific H-bomb tests all of our military thinking of the past, even of the previous year, was obsolete, obsolete, obsolete.

At about the same time, the U. S. Secretary of Defense said he was able to bring together a powerful army of ten million men. Immediately he was asked where that army would be concentrated. Because, wherever it would be, it was in danger of extinction from a single H-bomb. It would have to be dispersed throughout the United States or elsewhere, in which case it would lose much of its military effectiveness.

Now the Russians, with their characteristic sense of reality save when the doctrines of Marx are concerned, have reached the conviction that the vast Red Army is no longer a real asset. Mass armies in general are obsolete, obsolete, obsolete. The generals of NATO have a green light to make a war atomic. It is not sufficiently realized in the West that in Russia and its satellites, this development caused something like a panic. It meant that war with conventional weapons is "out" — and yet, it was precisely in that field that Russia had been superior.

The air maneuvers over West Germany called *carte blanche* have proved the Soviet fear justified. Over fifty atomic bombs would have been dropped, while thirty-six atomic cannon on German soil would have spewed out their wholesale extinction. Any Russian concentration on German soil would have been uselessly sacrificed. Farewell, strong Red Army! It was then that the Russians became champions of disarmament. Their plan to reduce their forces by six-hundred-and-forty thousand represents a substantial cut, but it is a reduction in an army which had already become obsolete.

Two recent events, when thoughtfully analyzed, confirm the chief reason — though not necessarily the only reason — for the Russian change of policy. When the Bonn government announced that conscription was imminent, the *Grotewohl* regime in East Germany announced that any West German war resister or conscientious objector would be welcome in the East (which needs manpower for industry), and would be granted not only the right of asylum but full citizenship. At once, West German pacifist youth — of whom there are many — inquired whether citizenship included the duty of military service on the other side, which would be repugnant. The answer was that the query was irrelevant, for there was no intention of introducing conscription in East Germany.

Many observers thought this was insincere. But it was probably sincere in this sense: it corresponded to reality. The East German army would hereafter have its main usefulness in preserving internal "order" against attempts to overthrow the communist-controlled government. Why force unwilling and unreliable Germans into such an army by a draft? Besides, the absence of conscription enables the East Zone to boast of itself as a liberal area without militarization.

For another tip-off on the change, it is worth while to look at the results of the World Peace Council's second big conference, this year held at Helsinki. The West has paid little attention to it, because the Vienna conference, two years ago, pulled out all the typical communist stops for the habitual "peace line." But this year's conference was entirely different. It was held in a country considered as Western in orientation. A Finnish cabinet minister opened it. It was sponsored by such personalities as Edouard Herriot and the Brazilian de Castro, whom no one has ever remotely thought of as communist in sympathy. And with the communist delegations still powerful, the conference, mostly unanimous, adopted resolutions in which the West was not at all accused of bellicose intentions. Note this:

> "The effective abolition of nuclear weapons cannot be achieved as an isolated action. This is now clear. It should be incorporated into the framework of general disarmament. The achievement of general disarmament on a large scale is not only necessary for its own sake, but also in order to diminish the tensions currently existing in the world. . . .
>
> ". . . Necessity of an understanding amongst all European states, regardless of difference of regimes, to safeguard their economic and cultural collaboration. *The United States, having an alliance with the countries of Western Europe,*

should be invited to take part in this system of collective security."

It is remarkable that such resolutions were adopted at a gathering of one thousand, eight hundred and forty-one from sixty-eight countries, with Americans comparatively absent and their influence at a minimum. Has it not always hitherto been the fierce endeavor of all Soviet politics to keep the U. S. out of any influence in Europe? Here they are urged to join all Europeans. The shift is basic.

Let us, however, not be over-idealistic in measuring the change. The new Russian attitude is not based on sentimental considerations. It comes from the stark fact, most of all, that the Red Army is no longer an asset. But exactly because it is a change based on reality, it can be regarded as reliable and politically "sincere." For that matter, what is true for the Russians is true for everybody. No wonder Germans are asking of what actual use will be the planned West German army, when fifty atomic bombs would render the country uninhabitable?

YOUR MONEY IS YOUR LIFE

Money has been named "filthy lucre," and the love of it has been called the "root of all evil." But as Shakespeare says, there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. And there are many who think of money as their other self, which it can be.

In short, money has a representative capacity.

Your money can go where you can never go, like another pair of legs. It can walk with people in far places, comforting them. Your money can lift loads, like an extra pair of hands, and carry burdens which your hands could never lift. And do it in your church, your community, your nation and the world.

Your money can speak up for you, in places where your natural voice could never reach. It can preach and teach and heal where your physical presence may never go. Yes indeed, your money IS your life. For what men and women do with it, they are in a very real sense doing with themselves.

And what they do NOT with it is vitally important as well.

We all have the basic instinct to acquire, and the basic instinct to share. The first we cannot deny. The second — to share — is one we can obey or not, as we choose.

It is man's wisdom to obey, and his danger not to. For by a curious psychological law, to the extent that a person ceases to give, to that extent he ceases to live.

—William Wallace Rose

WHY UNIVERSALISTS SHOULD KNOW THE BIBLE

The Bible is a part of our literary heritage. Our modern culture has its roots in many ancient cultures and has adopted their literature as its own. We have the writings of Homer and Plato, the stories of Hercules and Zeus, the Arabian Nights, Thor and Odin, the writings of Virgil and Shakespeare. Along with all these we have the Bible, the literature of the Hebrews and the early Jewish-Greek Christian Church. No one can understand our own times without some knowledge of each of these and especially of the Bible.

When the Bible is properly untangled from theology and read as literature it comes to life. We read the stories of Abraham, who sought a new home and became the father of a new race, of Saul and David, who founded a nation, of Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Hosea, and other Prophets, who turned a tribal religion into a Universal Faith, of Jesus and Paul and the beginnings of Christianity. We share in the trials of the Hebrews and glory in the vision of their faith. We puzzle with them over the problems of life and share in the inspiration of their thought.

There is another reason for Universalists to interest themselves in the Bible. This is to rescue it from the misinterpretation and abuse it so frequently receives from those whose zeal exceeds their scholarship. The Bible is frequently presented as a book of magic, a guide-book to supernaturalism, or the "true" story of man. Such usage can be met only by a greater understanding and zeal for the truth.

—Donald B. King

CHURCH OF THE LARGER FELLOWSHIP

The Church of the Larger Fellowship is maintained to serve Universalists and other liberals who are geographically isolated from a local Universalist Church.

To serve our people, the Church needs their names and addresses. When people move from your church to another community, won't you send us their names and addresses? We will then refer them to a Universalist church in that community, or ask if we may not serve them through The Church of the Larger Fellowship.

Philip R. Giles, *Director*
16 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

Our Library Desk

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

By William Robinson
Bethany Press, St. Louis
Price $3.00

This volume, which first appeared in 1948, was the embodiment of a series of eight lectures delivered by the author (then principal of Overdale College, England) at Butler University. Long interested as he had been in the movement for church unity, his lectures contained considerable material which he had earlier presented at the Edinburgh Conference in 1937. Now in the light of the Evanston Assembly he has revised and reissued the book, adding Chapter X, which latter not only supplies information as to the trend toward a greater unity but also a convenient résumé of much of the material in the earlier lectures — an addition for which many an untutored reader who does not easily understand the language of Zion, as uttered by the latter-day prophets of neoörthodoxy (*sub specie aeternitatis*), will be grateful.

The volume will make strong and strange reading for many liberal Protestants. The author, long a Disciple minister, is a very strenuous advocate for high-churchism but is by no means enamoured of a high-clericalism finding itself supported by theories of apostolic succession. He is also a thoroughgoing and zealous devotee of biblical theology which finds an unbroken unity in God's revelation to the true Israel of God throughout both Testaments; which discovers and isolates a "holy history" as the real kernel of all history; which evidences a blissful unconcern for severe chronology with easy references to "beyond time" or to the *"eschaton"* or the to me not crystal-clear type of statement, "What is still to be, is already realized in the present. Already the *eschaton,* the end of history, has appeared in the midst of time" (p. 113); and which dismisses liberalism with an airy and nonchalant gesture as not worth talking about (cf. ". . . when the work of Harnack still had the glow of freshness about it but which today is no longer seriously advanced in the name of New Testament scholarship," -pp. 36 f.), but which utilizes within limits biblical criticism as long as it is insulated from and not detrimental to the desired theology. Jesus is not so much the founder of the Christian church — although Robinson waxes sarcastic at Bishop Barnes who denied it, as I supposed all respectable critics still continued to do — as the "re-creator" of the church. Lest one wonder precisely what that nonluminous phrase means — a state I constantly found myself in as I struggled on — he may be assured that for Robinson Christ is actually himself the church, the true Israel of God. Thus the church — not the hierarchy — is the true continuum of apostolicity, for Jesus, who was "apostolic" (*shaliach*), that is, "sent on apostolic mission," entrusted this task to his followers. But more than that, one might say: There never was a time when the church was not, for "neither the Bible nor classical Protestantism knows anything of Christianity without the church" (p. 207).

He contemptuously and repeatedly dismisses the notion that the church— not to mention separate churches — is a *"free association* of men and women who pledge themselves by a certain loyalty to Christ and to one another" (p. 161). Instead it is "the fulfillment in time of the activity of the Word of God which began with the first creative act" (*ibid.*). Thus the church cannot start afresh in any age, as the "sect type" of churches mistakenly incline to think. And these latter would better learn that fact of life at once. It was God, not man, who gave it its skeletal form, *viz.,* the "body of Christ."

The early chapters of the book set forth his view of the church "revealed as a historic reality," the instrument which is set in the world to achieve God's purpose of redemption, penetrating into every area of life. At the rending of the veil the church took the place of the temple as the place of the Presence of God. It is an abiding reality with historical continuity, that is, *"one* church in all ages and all places"; is *catholic* in that it breaks all bounds of time and place, of class and race and sex. Thus it is, to repeat, apostolic, one with the church of the apostles. This continuity is to be maintained, since God has so arranged it. If God saw fit that his Son took the "form" of a servant, we must not — as too many Protestants do — be indifferent to the "form" which the church, as the true body of Christ, was given and must accordingly continue to preserve in history (p. 210).

Any brief review must be unfair. Rarely have I seen a book where random quoting apart from context could be more misleading. Despite a radically different reading of the pages of the past — more indistinct to me than to Robinson and his *pedisequui*— which fails to reveal this everywhere present "fundamental unity," so clear to the biblical theologian, and which would phrase and evaluate the activity of Jesus and his followers in very different language — and concepts — I find the book of value. It is the work of one who knows at first hand what is transpiring in the so-called Ecumenical Movement. It reveals very clearly the especial bone of contention — the sacraments and who can with right perform them, that is, the ministry, and it frankly faces the problems and headaches involved. It is critical, as I have suggested, of much free-church practice and unconcern. It is equally brisk in its critique of the "high-clerical" churches, and it considers in detail the proper attitude of church to state, as well as the utter impropriety of the church attempting to become another political entity. She cannot do that, and she must not attempt to be a national church. Rather she must struggle for a Christian civilization. Her task is to redeem the world; her position that of responsibility, not privilege. The book concludes with a quick sketch, both readable and factual, of the progress of the movement for unity, which started modestly in the formation of the Y.M.-C.A. and Y.W.C.A. and of which Evanston was considered by many to be a momentous step forward, by others a somewhat pathetic indication of the distance yet to go.

—MORTON S. ENSLIN

JOURNEY TOWARD SELF-REALIZATION

By Joseph R. Cygon
Willing Publishing Company,
San Gabriel, California
Price $4.00

The "Journey" is taken by way of the four Gospels. Its termination is a personal religious experience in which a mystical union of man's "self" with his divine "Self" (God in Man) is effected. Cygon finds in the Gospels, in addition to a Jesus of history and a basis for theological teachings about him, a "symbology."

This "symbology" is an interpretation of the Gospels which draws from the immediate experience of the early Gnostics, from modern psychology, from Higher Criticism and from the development of theological concepts of Christianity. Orthodoxy and literal interpretations have erred because they failed to see the meaning of Biblical figures as symbols. Cygon argues that the main purpose of the Gospel writers was to present the way toward self-realization in symbolic terms.

Zechariah is the symbol of "reason." Elizabeth is the symbol of the "soul." Together they produce John the Baptist, the symbol for "repentence" and the first step on the Journey. After repentance comes a birth of Christ in the lives of each person. This is symbolized by the events of the Annunciation and Nativity. The life and ministry of Jesus are the symbols for the maturing soul. Finally the state of spiritual maturity is symbolized by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The book devotes emphasis to Jesus' birth, the hidden years, the Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount, the Parables and his death. One interesting sidelight is the observation that Jesus' concept of the coming of the end of the world was "a projection of the inner catastrophe" through which Jesus was passing psychologically.

The author, Joseph R. Cygon, is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, a Major who has served over twenty years in the regular army. Since 1933 he has been studying in the fields of psychology and religion.

I am certain that this book has been a rewarding experience for the author. I hope others may find it so. For the critical reader, I fear the book is at once too general and too specific. To suggest the Gospels as a Way of Self-Realization doesn't tell us enough of what to do and how to live to achieve it. When the symbology makes Peter a symbol of "fickle will" and James another symbol of "reason" one's credulity is strained in trying to grasp the reality of the theory.

—MAURICE W. COBB

THE WHOZITS

By Frances Williams Brown
Aberlard-Schuman, Inc., New York
Price $2.50

The Whozits is a very interesting book. I think it would be particularly interesting to children between the ages of ten through sixteen.

The story is about a mother and her daughter, Doris, who live on Clinton Street. Doris goes to a private school and is very popular. None of her friends live around her, so she is very lonesome. In church one Sunday, the minister asked the people if they would like to take in a family of displaced persons from Europe. Doris and her mother had a lot of room in their house that they didn't need. They went to see the minister to find out just how they should go about getting a family over to the United States. Doris said she wanted a family with a girl her age and if there were more children, they could come too. In the meantime, Doris and her mother called the family that were coming, "The Whozits." A few months went by before they got a letter saying the Whozits would be arriving at the dock at about noon. Their name is Widlaski. Krysia was thirteen and Bogdon was seven. Doris and her mother had to wait practically three or four hours while the Widlaskis got their papers ready. When they got off the boat, Doris was shocked at their appearance. Mrs. Widlaski and Krysia had their hair braided on the top of their heads. All of them had Polish clothes on. Krysia was so much smaller than Doris that she looked about ten years old. None of the Widlaskis could speak English, so that the trip home was a silent one. Back home (Doris' house on Clinton Street) Doris tried very hard to be friends with Krysia, but she seemed so far away. Anytime Doris tried to do anything nice for Krysia, she would look at her as if she hated her. Doris and Bogdon got along fine when Krysia was not around, but the minute she saw them together, she would send Bogdon to his room. One day, Krysia and Bogdon came home from school crying because the other children had made fun of their clothes. Doris was not surprised so she took Krysia to her room, cut her hair, and gave her some clothes she had outgrown. She bought Bogdon some American clothes and had his hair cut too. About eight months went by without any progress in Doris' and Krysia's friendship.

One day, while sitting in the park, Krysia told a very interesting story about her former home in Poland. Everything turned out fine between Krysia and Doris after that.

—NANCY WOOD

FOOLS FOR CHRIST

By Jaroslav Pelikan
Muhlenberg Press, 1955
Price $3.00
172 Pages

Dr. Pelikan holds the chair of Historical Theology at the University of Chicago; is a Lutheran and an existentialist. His book is composed of six essays in which he considers the relation of the Holy, remembered from Rudolph Otto's recent book, to the human values, the True, the Good and the Beautiful. Kierkegaard and Paul are his witnesses that knowledge cannot embrace, but rather is reached only through, the Holy. Dostoevsky and Luther testify that morality does not lead to the Holy, may, indeed, be the antithesis of it ". . . the holiness of God (creates) the goodness of man . . ."

These first four essays are fundamentally stimulating and of a far more vital character than the last two in which Nietzsche and Bach, rather reluctantly, witness that the arts are a derivative of, rather than a way to, faith in God. These human values are presented as ways in which man vainly has tried to "domesticate God," to render God objective and therefore controllable. The Holy is by nature subjective and forever eludes man's knowledge. We certainly must agree with Dr. Pelikan and his witness that God cannot be encompassed by partialistic (or any other) views, but must we not equally recognize that God cannot be kept out of even the narrowest area of human thought and experience?

—ALBERT F. ZIEGLER

News of Churches and Church People

MURRAY GROVE HOUSE BURNS TO THE GROUND

Murray Grove House

All that was left after the fire

Fire of undetermined origin completely destroyed the Murray Grove House Thursday evening, August 11. With the historic old hotel went most of the records of the Murray Grove Association. The fire happened on the eve of the Association's Annual Meeting, hence the presence of the record books in the hotel.

The Murray Grove House was originally built in 1900 and enlarged in 1920. It was a three-story frame structure containing dining room and lobby in addition to seventy-six rooms.

In the hotel, the adjoining buildings and the memorial chapels Universalists of the New York and Philadelphia areas have for many years held summer religious institutes. Over the years, thousands of Universalists have visited Murray Grove as a shrine of Universalism. Here stands the little Thomas Potter Meeting House, the oldest church building in New Jersey. In this church, John Murray first preached the gospel of Universalism in America in the fall of 1770.

Present indications are that the Murray Grove Association plans to rebuild. In the words of Mr. James Weakley, veteran Murray Grover, "The demands of our members, neighbors and friends have insisted that we rebuild. So with the co-operation of our friends, we are hoping to have a larger and better Murray Grove House."

GEORGIA UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION

Universalists of Georgia met in state convention session at Rockwell Universalist Church, Winder, Georgia, August 13 and 14.

The convention was called to order by the president, J. W. Wilson. Following a roll call of the churches and presentation of credentials, the delegates listened to the secretary's report by Rufus McCall and the treasurer's report presented by Mrs. Grady Wheelis.

The convention sermon was preached by the Rev. Leonard C. Prater, superintendent of Mississippi Universalist Churches.

Following dinner the first hour of the afternoon session was given over to a meeting of the Georgia Association of Universalist Women, Mrs. Paul Carter presiding.

The convention business session then resumed and the delegates acted on reports and recommendations. A highlight of the session was the amending of the Bylaws reactivating the state Fellowship Committee.

Officers elected include J. Hunter Wilson, president; P. E. Carter, vice-president; Rufus B. McCall, secretary; Herbert Moon, treasurer; Joseph A. Rabun, John M. Schofield, Fred Hoger and Mrs. P. E. Carter, trustees from their respective churches to serve for two years. The fellowship committee will consist of the Rev. E. L. Halfacre, the Rev. Joseph E. Rabun, and John M. Schofield.

At the evening young people's meeting and banquet, Dr. Stanley C. Stall of New York state was the speaker. Dr. Stall also presided at the Sunday morning devotional service and preached the Occasional Sermon.

A memorial service was also conducted by Mrs. Eva Rasnake.

THE UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE HONORED

The Universalist Service Committee was one of thirty voluntary private agencies working in the Orient to be honored by the Fund for Asia, Wednesday, October 5, at a special dinner held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. Seated at The Universalist Service Committee table were Mr. and Mrs. Walter Worthington (Floral Park), Colonel James Wilson, Roland Gammon, the Rev. Albert Ciarcia of The Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City, William L. Smith, Robert C. Panemoy, Herman Fuchs (Brooklyn, New York), the Rev. Carl Westman (Bridgeport, Connecticut) and the Rev. Dana E. Klotzle, executive director of The Universalist Service Committee.

Mrs. Worthington and Mr. Klotzle participated in the afternoon round tables dealing with medical education and community development. Leaders and speakers included Chester Bowles, Dr. Frank Laubach, James Michener and Paul Hoffman.

Mr. Hoffman said of the work done by the voluntary agencies:

"The help of private American agencies in many instances is more effective than government assistance.

"The free world should join forces and increase their exertions on the economic front. And Asia is the place where we must expend our greatest efforts in the decade to come. The future of the world may well rest on whether the young democracies of Asia are able to achieve a stable future and at the same time keep their freedom.

"We of the Western world must not only help them to help themselves—we must accord them the respect due to sovereign nations and above all avoid all kinds of aid that may develop along patterns preconceived by ourselves . . .

"I am certain that in making common the cause of waging peace the voluntary agencies have a unique part to play in Asia. The new democracies are concerned about governmental aid. They are fearful that there may be strings attached to it. This does not hold true in the case of aid from agencies supported by the Fund for Asia."

INSTALLATION

L. GORDON ADAMSON was installed as minister of the First Universalist Church of Brunswick, Maine, Friday evening, September 16.

The Rev. Walter E. Kellison, superintendent of Universalist Churches in Maine, presided and opened the service with a Call to Worship and Invocation. The Scripture was read by Dr. Walter Samuel Swisher. The Sermon and Charge to the People were both delivered by Mr. Kellison.

J. Albert Robinson, moderator of the church, presented Mr. Adamson for installation and Mr. Kellison led the congregation in the Act of Installation. The Installation Prayer was offered by the Rev. Sheldon Christian, one-time minister of the church.

The Rev. John Henry Wilson of Wilton, N. H., gave the Charge to the Minister. Greetings from the community were brought by the Rev. J. Arthur Samuelson, minister of the First Parish Church of Brunswick, Maine. The Benediction was pronounced by the Rev. L. Gordon Adamson.

A reception for Mr. and Mrs. Adamson was given by the ladies of the church following the Installation Service.

AYER APPOINTED FERRY BEACH PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR

Ferry Beach has a Director of Public Relations. The trustees of the Ferry Beach Park Association this fall elected the Rev. Eric Alton Ayer to this new position on a full-time basis. Mr. Ayer will be traveling a good share of the time visiting individual Ferry Beachers, ministers, church groups, conferences, and conventions. He will be available as a guest preacher at Sunday morning services and at gatherings in any of the local churches, especially in the New England area.

The trustees of the Ferry Beach Park Association are hopeful that with a full-time staff member available the Institutes for next summer will be well promoted and a goodly number of delegates from our churches will avail themselves of the wonderful opportunities which Ferry Beach has to offer.

The tentative schedule of Institutes follows:

June 30-July 14 — Camp Seabreeze (Junior High)

July 14-July 28 — Religious Education weeks

July 28-August 4 — open (at present)

August 4-August 11 — Association of Universalist Women

August 11-August 18 — World Affairs

August 18-August 25 — Family Fellowship

August 25-September 2—Youth Lab (NERC)

Labor Day week-end — Young Adults

STANLEY STALL GOES TO KENTUCKY

The Rev. Stanley C. Stall, minister of the Universalist Church in Herkimer, New York, since March 1st, 1949, has resigned his church effective as of January 1, 1956, to become minister of the Universalist Church in Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

Mr. Stall came to Herkimer from Rocky Mount, N. C. Prior to service in North Carolina, he was for fifteen years minister of the church in Norwalk, Ohio and for nine years state superintendent of churches in Ohio.

In addition to ministering to the church at Herkimer, he has served the church at Schuyler Lake since September 1951 with evening services and beginning with September of this year, he began serving the church at Salisbury Center with Sunday afternoon services.

Mr. Stall will have general charge of the Universalist Churches in Kentucky and will seek to develop a strong church in Hopkinsville and to give such help as may be possible to the rural churches in the state.

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WALTHAM CHURCH DONATES CABIN TO FERRY BEACH

Miss Effie Higgins, Miss Isabelle Russell, Mrs. Rena Fancy, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Russell attended the dedication Saturday, August 6, at Ferry Beach, Saco, Maine, of the new Beacon Waltham Cabin donated by the Waltham Universalist Church to the Ferry Beach Park Association.

Miss Higgins made the dedication speech presenting the cabin as a permanent memorial of the former Beacon Universalist Church, Brookline, and the First Universalist Church of Waltham. The Rev. Mr. Rawson, president of the Ferry Beach Park Association, gave the prayer. Following the dedication ceremony a lobster bake was held in front of the cabin.

At the annual meeting preceding the afternoon ceremony, Edwin C. Forrester of Waltham was re-elected a director to serve a three-year term.

OBITUARY

ALBERT I. SPANTON

Albert I. Spanton, beloved educator and Universalist minister, died after a brief illness from coronary thrombosis in a hospital in Akron, Ohio, August 31. Dean Spanton was stricken at his home the night of August 28. Following his removal to the hospital he rallied briefly, but failed to recover.

Albert I. Spanton was born in Sunderland, England, eighty-two years ago. He came to this country with his parents when he was twelve years old. The elder Spantons settled in Columbia County, Ohio. In his youth Albert Spanton was successively miner, clerk and teacher as he was growing up with mid-western America. Always, however, he was a young man determined to get an education. This he got in Buchtel College, Akron, preparing himself also for the Universalist ministry. He was graduated from the college in 1899.

The young minister's plans were changed by an emergency situation in his Alma Mater which resulted in his accepting a job teaching English in the college "for just a year." That stretched into forty-three years, during which the instructor in English and Biblical literature became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and remained in that office for many years. After his first four years of teaching, Dean Spanton took a year's leave of absence during which he studied at Harvard graduate school. He retired from the Dean's office in 1938 so that he could devote himself entirely to teaching Shakespeare and the Bible. In 1943 he retired officially from teaching.

Retirement did not mean idleness. To the end of his life he busied himself with travel and preaching. He served his church as president of the Ohio Universalist Convention and as a member of the Board of Education of The Universalist Church of America. Throughout his life in Akron he was also a faithful and energetic servant of his community. Last February the *Leader* printed (unbeknownst to Dean Spanton) a story of his life and work in which his many activities were detailed.

College, church, and community joined with three grandchildren and a nephew, Arthur Spanton, in paying tribute to the memory of Dean Spanton Saturday, September 3. Officiating at the service in the First Universalist Church were Dr. Lawrence Wesley Abbott, minister of the church, and Dr. Donald K. Evans, superintendent of Ohio Universalist Churches.

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NOTICES

MASSACHUSETTS UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION

The Fellowship Committee at its September 14th meeting took the following action:

Transferred Mr. Paul Sawyer, Licentiate, to California.

Granted a Letter of License to Preach for one year to Mr. Alan L. Seaburg.

Added the right to perform the Christian Ordinances to Preaching License of Mr. Alan F. Sawyer, Jr., subject to the approval of the Central Fellowship Committee.

Authorized the Ordination of Mr. James Dennis Hunt.

Granted Reciprocal Fellowship to Mr. Carlyle H. Meacham, Unitarian, subject to the approval of the Central Fellowship Committee.

—RAYMOND M. SCOTT, *Secretary*

CENTRAL FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Central Fellowship Committee approved the action of the Maine Fellowship Committee in granting Reciprocal Fellowship to L. Gordon Adamson, an ordained Unitarian clergyman, August 12, 1955.

Ratified the action of the California Fellowship Committee in granting to Daniel W. Weck, a licentiate, the right to perform the Christian ordinances.

Transferred Reverend John B. Wolf to Pennsylvania jurisdiction.

Dropped from reciprocal fellowship the Rev. W. Curtis Crawford and the Rev. Marvin G. Palmerlee because they gave up their primary fellowship with the American Unitarian Association on March 15, 1955.

—ESTHER A. RICHARDSON
Secretary

RHODE ISLAND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Rhode Island Fellowship Committee, meeting on September 14, 1955, voted unanimously to grant the Rev. Arthur G. Seabury an ordained minister's license for the probationary period of one year.

—HENRY H. SCHOOLEY, *Secretary*

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MASSACHUSETTS FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Notice is hereby given that the Committee of Fellowship of the Massachusetts Universalist Convention will convene at 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts, on the 9th day of November, 1955, at 2:30 P.M., for the examination of Mr. Carl J. Nelson, "as to his fitness in purpose, character, training and ability for the ministry of the Universalist Church."

—RAYMOND M. SCOTT, *Secretary*

OHIO UNIVERSALIST-UNITARIAN EDUCATION INSTITUTE

The Universalist Church of Ohio and the Universalist and Unitarian Churches of Cincinnati jointly sponsored the third annual combined teacher training institute for liberal churches in the southern Ohio area. Sessions were held on September 20 and 27 and October 4, at City Temple Universalist Church, St. John's Unitarian Church and the First Unitarian Congregational Church. Teachers and students of religious education from Eldorado, New Madison, Blanchester and Milford Universalist churches and Dayton Unitarian Church were in attendance.

The principal speakers were Dr. Rolland Wolfe of Western Reserve University, well-known Bible scholar and archaeologist, the Rev. Donald B. King of Hoopeston, Illinois, author of many liberal Bible study lessons, Dr. Robert Weston, minister of the Louisville, Kentucky, church, and Mrs. Helen Osborne, Unitarian lay-woman and professor at Teachers' College, University of Cincinnati.

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